

## House Republican Press Release

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### **Rep. Tymniak Opposes Democrats' Attempt to Obtain Taxpayer Returns**



State Rep. Cathy C. Tymniak, R-133rd, Fairfield, Westport, praised Gov. M. Jodi Rell for blocking Democratic efforts to provide millions of individual and corporate tax returns to a legislative committee, and opposed this violation of taxpayers' privacy in order to formulate tax policy.

Rep. Tymniak, ranking member of the legislature's Banks Committee, said, "We have been working to provide more protection of tax returns and personal financial information. The legislature adopted several bills to guard against identity theft and release of financial data. Now, some legislators are attempting an egregious invasion of privacy. That's not what the people expect from their legislature."

"It is an abuse of taxpayers' rights and privacy to allow legislators and staff members to pore over private tax returns that could then be used for any number of illegitimate purposes," said Rep. Tymniak.

Rep. Tymniak added, "Taxpayers understand they have to file tax returns with the state and federal governments, but there is an expectation of privacy that some legislators want to violate. I see this as no valid reason for legislators to look at individual taxpayers' returns."

Rep. Tymniak said, "The Democrats want access to computer files with every Connecticut taxpayer's returns as well as social security number. I think that's wrong."

House Speaker James Amann and Majority Leader Christopher Donovan, in a letter to Attorney General Richard Blumenthal Sept. 12, asked if the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services (DRS) must provide the legislature's Program Review and Investigations Committee access to all tax records for a study of state tax policy due by December 31. Blumenthal said access was permitted.

Gov. Rell said she expects the Department of Revenue Services to protect taxpayers' rights and preserve their privacy. Republican Senate Chair Catherine Cook also forcefully disputed the assertion by Amann and Donovan that she had asked for the records. Cook said exactly the opposite was true and that the committee didn't need the returns to complete its work.

Rep. Tymniak said, "Once lawmakers and staff have access to personal tax records, privacy goes out the window."